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by which an honest man may be hampered in the proper exercise of his business, while the knave evades or boldly breaks through the net, with which it is proposed to secure him. I sincerely hope no efforts will be made to revive this oath of office, which very properly has almost become obsolete, though the enaction of the law is of recent date, I believe it is not passed above twenty years ago.

Public bakeries judiciously and conscientiously managed so as to hold an even balance between the interests of the public, and the fair profits of the trader, afford an excellent substitute for legislative or magisterial interference. Thus administered, they act on the fair principle of commercial rivalship. That they may not bear too hard on the private baker, or encroach on his reasonable profits, for all trades should be allowed to live, the subscribers should have a moderate profit on their deposites. If a public institution of this sort make a moderate dividend the private tradesman must be still better circumstanced as he has many advantages in the economy of management over a public institution; and to the enjoyment of these advantages the private baker is justly entitled. No attempts should be made to run him down, for this might lead to a most injurious and unjust monopoly on the part of the subscribers to a public bakery.

The leading aim of the managers of such an institution should be scrupulously to adjust the interests of the consumers and the bakers of bread, to prevent the former from being imposed upon by too small a loaf, or to bear too hard on the latter, so as not to allow him a full recompense for his toil and risque.

If public bakeries were generally established, and these principles strictly adhered to by an efficient committee of active and impartial men, the assize of bread would be better regulated than by oaths, or the remitting activity of public officers. The equitable principle of commerce, by customers going to the shop whether public or private at which they are best served, answers every purpose, as the bublic bakery always keeps up a fair competition, while care is taken that the trade should not degenerate into a monopoly on either sides. I see only one objection to public bakeries, the difficulty of getting a suitable committee who will attend to their functions in the present lack of public spirit.

K.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ON SOME FASHIONABLE ERRORS IN SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.

IT has been asserted that some foreign nations have no term in their language equivalent to our word, comfort. Probably national partiality has issued this assertion, which like many other vague and confident maxims has been implicitly adopted without examination, through the prejudice of national vanity. Be this, however, as it may, I am confident, that there is no such word, as comfort in the vocabulary of the votaries of fashion, who have no other standard of convenience than the prevailing mode of the day, but who with wonderful facility discover that those things which were convenient, and had innumerable advantages yesterday, have lost to day all these advantages not from any alteration intrinsically in the things themselves, but because fashion in the omnipotence of her sway, has changed her unstable and fluctuating decrees. But it is not my intention at present to attack the voluminous and unsettled code of fashion, at full length or in bulk, such an attempt would bewilder myself and my readers: I shall select only one of her laws, and endeavour to show how far the unaffected hospitality of former times has been ill exchanged for the ostentatious entertainments of the present day.

In good old fashioned times, a friend was received without ceremony, and invited to partake of the fare that was going, so as to suit his convenience, and a hearty welcome supplied the place of ostentation. If a friend from a distance called in, he was heartily welcomed and his accommodation, not the vanity of the entertainer to display the parade of a costly entertainment set out

with all the accompaniments of frippery and show was made the measure of this real hospitality. One neighbour visited another in a free and easy manner, without the formality and intolerable fatiguing burden of a long preparation. Now it is the fashion to give *feasts*. "The peasant's toe treads on the courtier's heel," and the formerly plain character of the merchant and his family is changed into the stately manners of the ancient aristocracy. Invitations are issued many days beforehand; immense preparations are made, to which if the mistress of the house is an economist, and minds household affairs, she becomes a slave, and a week of anxiety, *that all may go off well* is repaid by a few hours of a hurried and unsocial croud. I suppose I ought to apologize for the unfashionable vulgarity of my notions in allotting such employment for the Madame, for in the point of good housewifery also I fear fashion has extended its baneful influence. The day comes, at a late hour the company assemble in a crowded room, sociability, or the free converse of congenial minds is banished, and reserve and constraint, the necessary attendants of large companies are substituted. A few general common place subjects of conversation are touched upon, each attempts some kind of vague interchange of words with his neighbour, and the dinner proceeds in all the established routine of fashionable dullness. Sometimes there is a different but not better state. Maria Edgeworth in her excellent tale of Manœuvring, informs us that "at such dinners is the best time in the world for telling secrets to next neighbours, for every body is talking at once, and eating, and drinking, and carving. You may say what you please, your neighbours are all happily engaged, too busy to mind you.—The most perfect solitude is not so convenient as one of those great dinners" But general interesting conversation is banished from such societies where all are totally absorbed in their insulated enjoyments. This is a severe but just sarcasm on modern fashionable parties Cowper with his delicate pen sums up the close of such mixed and fatiguing assemblages.

"The visit paid, with extacy we come,
As from a seven years' transportation home,
And there resume an unembarass'd brow,
Recovering what we lost, we know not how,
The faculties that seem'd reduced to nought,
Expression and the privilege of thought."

We frequently hear the quotation of "the feast of reason and the flow of soul," miserably misapplied on such occasions. In some instances, and to describe occurrences of this kind, there is a *cant* of expression ready to be applied on all occasions. Expressions without a precise appropriate meaning, may be denominated cant.

The remarks on great dinners are equally applicable to large evening parties. The richer inhabitants of Belfast and our country towns imitate at unequal distance, the manners of the larger cities—for here also,

——"Our drawing rooms begin to blaze,
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied,
From many a mirror."——

The infection spreads: those who are less able to afford the expense, follow the example, and the influence of fashion descends through two or three lower links of the chain. Through all classes comforts and real satisfactions are diminishing and show, and a state, in many instances, approaching to *splendid misery* usurp their place. Dr. Franklin judiciously remarks that notwithstanding our complaints of bad times, our heaviest tax is imposed by our vanity.

Without unduly lavishing praises on past times, it may be allowed to wish for a return to greater simplicity of manners, less shew and more substantial comforts. Real enjoyments would be increased by a salutary reduction of luxurious habits. Sentiments of virtuous independence would also be thus strengthened, for the air of a drawing room, as well as "the gilt buffet's reflected pride," have an injurious effect, indispose the mind to reflection,

"And turns from sound philosophy aside."

We require reforms in our social manners, and it would be of unspeakable advantage to the cause of public reform, if it were thoroughly bottomed on the basis of private and

individual reform. The abrogation of luxury would confer two most essential benefits, the promotion of domestic happiness and the increase of public and private virtue. It would be well to resist the sway of fashion, and submit only to the rule of reason not to live as others live, but according to a well digested plan suited to our particular circumstances, to enjoy as many of the comforts, and as few of the inconveniences of life, as may be consistent with our lot—at least let us not multiply evils by an unwise choice, and a foolish imitation of fashionable life, but wisely prefer reality to tinsel and comfort to show.

K.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SHIP ECONOMY, 200 TONS MEASUREMENT, BUILT ACCORDING TO J. W. BOSWELL'S PATENT.

THE plan adopted in the formation of this ship is that designed for large ships of 500 tons and upwards, and the third mentioned in the specification.*

Its external appearance is not different from that of another vessel of the size, and the outward planking is done in the usual manner. It is the internal construction alone to which the patent relates, and that is as follows:

The best general idea of it will be obtained by conceiving a vessel built with timbers, or ribs, much smaller than usual, with an internal framing, so contrived as to give every requisite support and strength both to them and the entire vessel, with the least timber and of the cheapest form, and without any knee timber.

The floor-timbers are molded seven inches, and sided six: these, with four futtocks and two top timbers at each side, form what is called a frame of timbers. Those small timbers are laid down so that their terminations all fall out in fair lines, which (below the wales) are nearly the same as the ribband lines. Along those lines inside are laid fore and aft ribs, from stem to stern post, so as to support the extremity of every one of the small ribs in the ship. The fore and aft ribs are six in number at each side; one directly under the water ways, another at the level of the lower beams, and the other four are placed nearly at equal distances between these last and the kelson;—each pair uniting in a breast-hook at the stem.

The pieces of timber which form these fore and aft ribs are scarfed at their extremities with hook scarfs, and so placed that the scarfs fall out in fair vertical sections of the ship, where they are supported, and firmly bolted to transverse framings, contrived so as to unite the greatest strength with the least obstruction, and which are five in number in the whole ship.

Those transverse framings are each formed by one upper and one lower beam, two pair of futtocks, a floor timber, two pair of top timbers and four bracing pieces; the whole connected into one firm framing, self-supported, independent of any other part.

The four bracing pieces form each framing into a set of triangular compartments: which triangular framing gives the greatest stability possible, as a triangular frame cannot be made to give in, or alter its figure, by any force which is not sufficient to tear its connecting parts through the timber of which it is composed; a property which no other figure possesses.

These tranverse framings (besides supporting the fore and aft ribs, and by them the small vertical timbers) tie and unite the vessel together across ship, so as to give much greater strength than hanging knees, whose place they supply, at a much cheaper rate.

The framing of the deck is also divided into triangular compartments, so as to preclude the use of lodging knees entirely; which compartments are formed by six pieces of timber, which proceed obliquely at each side, from the top of each beam to the fore and aft rib next adjoining, into which they are dove-tailed and bolted; long carlings from beam to beam, at each side of the hatchways, with

* See vol. II. Second Series, p. 81 of Repertory of Arts.